§iv

Chemistry, similarly, furnishes a few names of first importance, the results of whose investigations are felt in every branch of our daily life. It was in 1859 that Adolf Frank began to study systematically the plant-consumption of potash, which had been noticed by the great chemist Liebig. In 1861, as the results of his researches, he set up his first factory, thus founding the great (and until recent years, exclusively German) potash industry. In addition, he developed all the commercial by-products—bromide, ammonia, and the various chlorides—which themselves became the nuclei of great industries. Frank's collaborator, Nicodem Caro, one of the most prolific workers in German chemistry, joined with him in perfecting a method for obtaining nitrogen from the air—a discovery of great practical significance. Fritz Haber carried these discoveries a step further, when he devised his method for producing ammonia from the nitrogen in the air and hydrogen, thereby rendering unlimited supplies of natural fertiliser available for the soil. (For this discovery, he was given the Nobel Prize in 1919.) It was his discoveries which enabled Germany to withstand a world in arms, between 1914 and 1918. Nevertheless, he died in voluntary exile: and it was in England that his services to science were formally commemorated. Another great German Jewish chemist whose work links up with that of this group was Victor Meyer, a brilliant worker in Stereo-

chemistry, whose apparatus for the determination of ^vapour-densities is the most widely used, and who did much brilliant work in elucidating the constitution of molecules. In 1882 he discovered in impure benzine the sulphur-containing compound thiophene, and thereby did a